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Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

Report of the Second Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Awsan **Al-Aud** (Yemen)

I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 19 September 2008, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-third session the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)" and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Second Committee considered the item at its 20th, 27th and 31st meetings, on 28 October, 18 November and 11 December 2008. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/63/SR.20, 27 and 31). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 2nd to 6th meetings, from 6 to 8 October (see A/C.2/63/SR.2-6).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/63/291);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General (A/63/353) transmitting his report on the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda (E/2008/64).

4. At the 20th meeting, on 28 October, the Executive Director of UN-Habitat made an introductory statement (see A/C.2/63/SR.20).

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II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/63/L.26 and A/C.2/63/L.64

5. At the 27th meeting, on 18 November, the representative of Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)" (A/C.2/63/L.26), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolutions 3327 (XXIX) of 16 December 1974, 32/162 of 19 December 1977, 34/115 of 14 December 1979, 56/205 and 56/206 of 21 December 2001, 57/275 of 20 December 2002, 58/226 and 58/227 of 23 December 2003, 59/239 of 22 December 2004, 60/203 of 22 December 2005, 61/206 of 20 December 2006 and 62/198 of 19 December 2007,

"*Taking note* of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2002/38 of 26 July 2002 and 2003/62 of 25 July 2003 and Council decisions 2004/300 of 23 July 2004, 2005/298 of 26 July 2005, 2006/247 of 27 July 2006, 2007/249 of 26 July 2007 and 2008/239 of 23 July 2008,

"*Recalling* the goal contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration of achieving a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020 and the goal contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation") to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people who lack access to safe drinking water and sanitation,

"*Recalling also* the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,

"*Recalling further* the 2005 World Summit Outcome, which calls upon the States Members of the United Nations to achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020, recognizing the urgent need for the provision of increased resources for affordable housing and housing-related infrastructure, prioritizing slum prevention and slum upgrading, and to encourage support for the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation and its Slum Upgrading Facility,

"*Recognizing* the negative impact of environmental degradation, including climate change, desertification and loss of biodiversity, on human settlements,

"*Recognizing also* that the current financial crisis is likely to have serious implications for sustained economic growth and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, and concerned about the impact of the sub-prime mortgage crisis in developed countries, the contagion it has unleashed throughout the global financial markets and the resultant adverse social and economic effects particularly for developing countries and low-income people in developed countries,

"*Recognizing also* the importance of housing finance in national wealth and the need for public intervention in response to the current turmoil in the financial system,

"*Noting* the important contribution of UN-Habitat, within its mandate, to more cost-effective transitions between emergency relief, recovery and reconstruction, and welcoming the decision to admit UN-Habitat to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee,

"*Recognizing* the significance of the urban dimension of poverty eradication and the need to integrate water and sanitation and other issues within a comprehensive framework for sustainable development,

"*Recognizing also* the importance of decentralization policies for achieving sustainable human settlements development in line with the Habitat Agenda and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

"*Noting with satisfaction* the progress of UN-Habitat in implementing the kick-start phase of its medium-term strategic and institutional plan for 2008-2013, including its strategic and institutional components,

"*Commending* the efforts of UN-Habitat, as a non-resident agency and through its national Habitat programme managers, in helping programme countries to mainstream the Habitat Agenda in their development frameworks,

"*Expressing its appreciation* to the Government of China and the city of Nanjing for hosting the fourth session of the World Urban Forum from 3 to 6 November 2008 and to the Government of Brazil for its offer to host the fifth session of the World Urban Forum, in 2010,

"*Noting* the efforts of UN-Habitat in strengthening its collaboration with the World Bank, the regional development banks and domestic financial institutions, ensuring that its policy advisory and capacity-building activities leverage investment finance to improve water and sanitation as an entry point to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

"*Recognizing* the need for UN-Habitat to sharpen its focus on all areas within its mandate,

"*Recognizing also* the continued need for increased and predictable financial contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation to ensure timely, effective and concrete global implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium, the experimental reimbursable seeding operations trust fund of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation and the relevant internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation,

"1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on

Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat);

"2. *Welcomes* the efforts of UN-Habitat in the implementation of its medium-term strategic and institutional plan for the period 2008-2013, and encourages Governments in a position to do so and other stakeholders to contribute generously to ongoing efforts in institutional reform and the pursuit of management excellence;

"3. *Calls upon* donor countries to support developing countries to strengthen the role and contribution of their respective local authorities in applying the principles and practices of sustainable urbanization in order to improve the living conditions of vulnerable urban populations, including slum-dwellers and the urban poor;

"4. *Calls for* enhanced financial support to UN-Habitat through increased voluntary contributions, and invites Governments in a position to do so and other stakeholders to provide predictable multi-year funding and increased non-earmarked contributions to support the institutional objectives of the medium-term strategic and institutional plan and its global campaign on sustainable urbanization;

"5. *Invites* the international donor community and financial institutions to contribute generously to the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund, the Slum Upgrading Facility, the technical cooperation trust funds and the experimental reimbursable seeding operations trust fund of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation to enable UN-Habitat to assist developing countries in mobilizing public investment and private capital for slum upgrading, shelter and basic services, recognizes that the current financial crisis carries the potential of adversely impacting the financial flows to such arrangements, and emphasizes that special efforts should be undertaken to protect those arrangements from a potential credit squeeze;

"6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of UN-Habitat under review so as to enhance its effectiveness in supporting national policies, strategies and plans in attaining the human settlements related goals and targets of the Millennium Declaration, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the 2005 World Summit Outcome;

"7. *Calls upon* UN-Habitat to strengthen efforts to coordinate and implement its normative and operational activities through the enhanced normative and operational framework elaborated in the medium-term strategic and institutional plan, reinforcing its normative activities, and invites all countries in a position to do so to support the activities of UN-Habitat in this regard;

"8. *Emphasizes* the need for UN-Habitat to enhance cooperation with regional and subregional organizations in strengthening the strategic presence of the programmes in the regions and in contributing to sustainable development programmes;

"9. *Requests* UN-Habitat, within the framework of its experimental reimbursable seeding operations for housing finance, and in close collaboration with international and regional financial institutions, to

document and disseminate lessons learned, fully taking into account the recent housing finance crisis;

"10. *Decides* to hold a special meeting of the General Assembly in 2009, within existing resources, for an overall review of the role of Government in housing finance systems, within the framework and full respect for the Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements and the Habitat Agenda;

"11. *Encourages* Member States to strengthen or establish, as appropriate, broad-based national Habitat committees with a view to mainstreaming sustainable urbanization and urban poverty reduction in their respective national development strategies;

"12. *Reiterates its call* to the Economic and Social Council to include sustainable urbanization, urban poverty reduction and slum upgrading as a standing item of its agenda and a cross-cutting issue in the follow-up to the outcomes of summits and major international conferences;

"13. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, and requests the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of UN-Habitat and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to UN-Habitat and the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

"14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

"15. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session the item entitled 'Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)'."

6. At its 31st meeting, on 11 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)" (A/C.2/63/L.64), submitted by the Vice-Chairman, Andrei Metelitsa (Belarus), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.26.

7. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

8. Also at the same meeting, the Vice-Chairman (Belarus) orally corrected the draft resolution.

9. Also at its 31st meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.64, as orally corrected (see para. 11).

10. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.64, draft resolution A/C.2/63/L.26 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

11. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3327 (XXIX) of 16 December 1974, 32/162 of 19 December 1977, 34/115 of 14 December 1979, 56/205 and 56/206 of 21 December 2001, 57/275 of 20 December 2002, 58/226 and 58/227 of 23 December 2003, 59/239 of 22 December 2004, 60/203 of 22 December 2005, 61/206 of 20 December 2006 and 62/198 of 19 December 2007,

Taking note of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2002/38 of 26 July 2002 and 2003/62 of 25 July 2003 and Council decisions 2004/300 of 23 July 2004, 2005/298 of 26 July 2005, 2006/247 of 27 July 2006, 2007/249 of 26 July 2007 and 2008/239 of 23 July 2008,

Recalling the goal contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[1] of achieving a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020 and the goal contained in the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation")[2] to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people who lack access to safe drinking water and sanitation,

Recalling also the Habitat Agenda,[3] the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium,[4] the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development,[5]

Recalling further the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[6] which calls upon the States Members of the United Nations to achieve significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers by 2020, recognizing the urgent need for the provision of increased resources for affordable housing and housing-related infrastructure, prioritizing slum prevention and slum upgrading, and to encourage support for the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation and its Slum Upgrading Facility,

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[1] See resolution 55/2.

[2] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 2, annex.

[3] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), Istanbul, 3-4 June 1996* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.97.IV.6), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[4] Resolution S-25/2, annex.

[5] *Report of the International Conference on Financing for Development, Monterrey, Mexico, 18-22 March 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.02.II.A.7), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[6] See resolution 60/1.

Recognizing the negative impact of environmental degradation, including climate change, desertification and loss of biodiversity, on human settlements,

Recognizing also that the current financial crisis could negatively affect the ability of UN-Habitat to mobilize resources and promote the use of incentives and market measures as well as the mobilization of domestic and international financial resources for supporting private sector investment in affordable housing,

Noting the important contribution of UN-Habitat, within its mandate, to more cost-effective transitions between emergency relief, recovery and reconstruction, and also welcoming the decision to admit UN-Habitat to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee,

Recognizing the significance of the urban dimension of poverty eradication and the need to integrate water and sanitation and other issues within a comprehensive framework for sustainable development,

Recognizing also the importance of decentralization policies for achieving sustainable human settlements development in line with the Habitat Agenda and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Noting the progress so far made by UN-Habitat in the implementation of its Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for the period 2008-2013,

Welcoming the efforts of UN-Habitat, as a non-resident agency and through its national Habitat programme managers, in helping programme countries to mainstream the Habitat Agenda in their development frameworks,

Expressing its appreciation to the Government of China and the city of Nanjing for hosting the fourth session of the World Urban Forum from 3 to 6 November 2008 and to the Government of Brazil for its offer to host the fifth session of the World Urban Forum in 2010,

Noting the efforts of UN-Habitat in strengthening its collaboration with the World Bank, the regional development banks and domestic financial institutions, ensuring that its policy advisory and capacity-building activities leverage investment finance to improve water and sanitation as entry point to the attainment of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Recognizing the need for UN-Habitat to sharpen its focus on all areas within its mandate,

Recognizing also the continued need for increased and predictable financial contributions to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation to ensure timely, effective and concrete global implementation of the Habitat Agenda, the Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium and the relevant internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[7] and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,

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[7] *Report on the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

Recognizing further the progress being made by UN-Habitat in the development of the Experimental Reimbursable Seeding Operations Trust Fund of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, established by the Governing Council of UN-Habitat in its resolution 21/10,[8]

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda[9] and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat);[10]

2. *Welcomes* the efforts of UN-Habitat in the implementation of its Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for the period 2008-2013, and encourages Governments in a position to do so, and other stakeholders, to contribute to UN-Habitat so as to further strengthen its efforts in institutional reform and the pursuit of management excellence, including results-based management;

3. *Encourages* Governments to promote the principles and practice of sustainable urbanization and strengthen the role and contribution of their respective local authorities in applying those principles and practice, in order to improve the living conditions of vulnerable urban populations, including slum-dwellers and the urban poor, and as a major contribution to mitigating the causes of climate change, adapting to the effects of climate change and reducing risks and vulnerabilities in a rapidly urbanizing world, including human settlements in fragile ecosystems, and invites the international donor community to support the efforts of developing countries in this regard;

4. *Reiterates its call* for continued financial support to UN-Habitat through increased voluntary contributions, and invites Governments in a position to do so, and other stakeholders, to provide predictable multi-year funding and increased non-earmarked contributions to support the strategic and institutional objectives of the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan for the period 2008-2013 and its Global Campaign on Sustainable Urbanization;

5. *Invites* the international donor community and financial institutions to contribute generously to the Water and Sanitation Trust Fund, the Slum Upgrading Facility and the technical cooperation trust funds to enable UN-Habitat to assist developing countries in mobilizing public investment and private capital for slum upgrading, shelter and basic services;

6. *Also invites* the international donor community and financial institutions to contribute to the Experimental Reimbursable Seeding Operations Trust Fund of the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of UN-Habitat under review so as to enhance its effectiveness in supporting national policies, strategies and plans in attaining the poverty eradication, gender equality, water and sanitation and slum upgrading targets of the United Nations Millennium

[8] See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-second Session, Supplement No. 8* (A/62/8), annex I, sect. B.

[9] E/2008/64.

[10] A/63/291.

Declaration,[1] the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation[2] and the 2005 World Summit Outcome;[6]

8. *Calls upon* UN-Habitat to strengthen efforts to coordinate and implement its normative and operational activities through the enhanced normative and operational framework elaborated in the Medium-term Strategic and Institutional Plan, reinforcing its normative activities, and invites all countries in a position to do so to support the activities of UN-Habitat in this regard;

9. *Invites* UN-Habitat to enhance cooperation with regional and subregional organizations and to consider strengthening the strategic presence of its programmes in the regions in contributing to sustainable development programmes;

10. *Requests* UN-Habitat, within the framework of its experimental reimbursable seeding operations for housing finance, and in close collaboration with international and regional financial institutions, to document and disseminate lessons learned, bearing in mind the provisions of resolution 21/10 of the Governing Council of UN-Habitat,[8] and fully taking into account the recent housing finance crisis, as well as other relevant factors;

11. *Invites* the Governing Council of UN-Habitat to keep under review developments in the housing finance systems in view of the current financial crisis, and decides to explore the possibility of convening a high-level event of the General Assembly on this subject;

12. *Encourages* Member States to strengthen or establish, as appropriate, broad-based national Habitat committees with a view to mainstreaming sustainable urbanization and urban poverty reduction in their respective national development strategies;

13. *Encourages* the Economic and Social Council to include sustainable urbanization, urban poverty reduction and slum upgrading as a cross-cutting issue in the follow-up to the outcome of relevant summits and major international conferences;

14. *Emphasizes* the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), and requests the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of UN-Habitat and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to UN-Habitat and the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution;

16. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)".